



DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

INFORMATION SERVICE

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

For Release ON RECEIPT

Are Hush Puppies, Pinebark Stew, or the ritual of an old-fashioned Clambake turned-down pages in your gastronomical history?

By opinion of the best of the seafoods epicures, then, you've lived-- or you haven't--depending on the answer.

To help you hasten in filling in this hiatus, the Fish and Wildlife Service, United States Department of the Interior, recommends a camping trip--with water, salt or fresh, near your destination--as solution to the perennial headache: "What to do on this year's vacation?"

As preliminary "come on", the Service offers this palate-tickling paragraph anent the puppies:

"Fish fries, held on the bank of a fishing stream, afford a convivial means of cooking and eating fish freshly caught by members of the party. The fish are cleaned and rolled in corn meal, then fried over an open fire in a large kettle or frying pan of hot fat. After the fish are cooked, Hush Puppies are fried in the fat remaining in the frying pan. These are made by mixing 2 cups corn meal, 1 cup milk or water, 1 teaspoon salt, 2 teaspoons baking powder, and 1 onion, finely chopped. Shape into pones and fry until well browned. Serve the fried fish and hush puppies with coffee or other suitable beverage." (250 Fish and Sea Food Recipes--Culinary Arts Institute)

And further to entice, from Fish Cookery In The Open (Special Memorandum 3215-A, Fish and Wildlife Service)-- a "paper to supply specialized information on the cooking of fish and shellfish by campers"--the famous "receipt" for Pinebark Stew, as tossed together for a camp of 32 people:

Pinebark Stew (for 32 people)

This dish which is popular for picnics in the South and especially in South Carolina, is varied in composition; the following recipe prepared at the Service's cooking laboratory is based on southern experience. A white meat fish that is firm when boiled is preferred; sunfish, bream, or bass are frequently used.

1 lb. bacon	2 tbsps. salt
15 lbs. white meat fish, dressed and split	1 lb. butter
5 lbs. diced potatoes	5 cups catsup
1-1/2 lb. sliced onions	2 tsp. black pepper
2 tbsps. curry powder	1 tsp. red pepper
	1 bottle Worcestershire sauce

A large Dutch Oven or heavy kettle and a large frying pan are desirable for cooking the stew. Mince the bacon and fry it dry in the kettle. Add the onion and cook to a golden yellow. Add the potatoes, salt, and 1 tbsp. curry powder; add just enough water to cover the potatoes, and simmer for about 20 minutes. Then add the split fish, mixing it with the potatoes and onions. Cook the whole for about 10 minutes or until the potatoes are soft.

While the fish is cooking, melt the butter in the frying pan and mix the other ingredients into the hot butter. Dip the liquor from the kettle into the frying pan with constant stirring, the result being a rich bark colored gravy or sauce. Serve large pieces of fish with the potatoes, on toast with rice, the gravy being poured over the portions of stew as served.

Finally--also from Fish Cookery In The Open--but without the directions for the elaborate ritual to accompany this New England eating orgy (for details, discuss with your nearest downeaster clam connoisseur) a brief discursion on the Clam Bake (for about 8 to 10 persons):

Clam Bake (8 to 10 people)

1-1/4 pecks clams (in the shell)
1 doz. ears sweet corn (all husks except inside layer removed)
1/2 peck sweet potatoes (or small white potatoes)

In addition to the clams, sweet corn, and potatoes, frankfurters and lobsters or other seafood may be used. The corn is cooked without removal of the inner layer of husks.

Build a rock platform about 4 feet square and 8 to 10 inches deep; provide plenty of fire wood and about 4 bushels of wet rock weed taken from the rocks; avoid old or dead weed as this will impart a bad flavor to the food. Build a fire to cover the rock platform and continue adding fuel for 1 to 2 hours until the stones are thoroughly heated and a good bed of embers is formed. Remove any smoking pieces of wood and cover the rocks and embers with at least 4 inches of the wet rock weed. Without loss of time, spread out the food on the bed of weed and cover with 4 inches more of the weed. Cover the whole with an old canvas so as to retain the steam that cooks the food. Keep the whole covered for about 40 minutes or until potatoes are cooked.

On the Pacific Coast, the heating stones are sometimes placed in a hole scooped out of the sand to a depth of 12 to 18 inches. In this section also, a layer of hot sand from around the fire is frequently used instead of canvas for covering the top layer of weed.

On both coasts, cheesecloth or similar light material is sometimes used to cover the food, being placed between this and the top layer of weed.

By eating near the cooking place, food may be kept covered and hot until used. The clams will open during the cooking. The loose cover around the neck of the clam should be removed and the dark neck may be cut (or bitten) off; the clams are dipped into hot melted butter as eaten.

It is a local custom, if the ingredients are available, to include green corn in the husk, lobster, chicken, etc., as supplements to the main dish.

#